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2010 Nebraska Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Location	Time
Sat, April 17	Spring Game	Memorial Stadium	1 p.m.
Sat, Sept. 4	Western Kentucky	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Sept. 11	Idaho	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Sept. 18	at Washington	Husky Stadium	TBA
Sat, Sept. 25	South Dakota State	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Thur, Oct. 7	at Kansas State	Snyder Stadium	TBA
Sat, Oct. 16	Texas	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Oct. 23	at Oklahoma State	Pickens Stadium	TBA
Sat, Oct. 30	Missouri	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Nov. 6	at Iowa State	Trice Stadium	TBA
Sat, Nov. 13	Kansas	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Nov. 20	at Texas A&M	Kyle Field	TBA
Fri, Nov. 26	Colorado	Memorial Stadium	TBA



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A DAY OF HISTORY

Joining the Big Ten will rank as one of the biggest days in Husker history



FRIDAY WILL GO down as one of the most historic days for the University of Nebraska, marking the moment the university officially became the 12th member of the Big Ten Conference.

While the headlines in recent weeks are littered with talk of expansion, contraction, movement and the dissolving of conferences, expansion is not something the Big Ten takes lightly. Nebraska is its first new member in 20 years, since Penn State was added in 1990 and just the second new member in 60 years.

Fans in other sports communities are taking shots at Nebraska. Some are calling it a money grab. Others accuse Nebraska of destroying the Big 12. Who cares? Let 'em bash Nebraska. Husker fans are used to it.

This was an aggressive move toward self-preservation. Can you imagine if the Big Ten had come calling and Athletic Director Tom Osborne and Chancellor Harvey Perlman were asleep at the wheel? What if they had said, "No thanks. We're good here in the Big 12."

Big Ten Commissioner Jim Delany would have pulled out his Rolodex and started calling the next school. Maybe Missouri. Instead of celebrating today, the Huskers would be in the

unfortunate situation of the Kansas Jayhawks, waiting for a call from somebody. Anybody.

This is an exciting day for Nebraska. Beginning in 2011, the Huskers will share the gridiron with some of the greatest programs in college football - programs like Michigan, Ohio State and Penn State. They can have a border war with Iowa. And who knows - maybe Notre Dame will join the fold and add to the tradition rich league?

Husker fans across the country will benefit from this move. The Huskers will now be easier than ever to follow. Have you seen the Big Ten Network? It's incredible. You can watch every Big Ten game each week. Not enough? They show replays of those games during the week. As we speak, I could be watching the greatest games in Big Ten history, except it has been pre-empted by an incredible special on today's expansion.

There are so many exciting stories ahead in the coming months. How will the divisions shake out in the Big Ten? What will Nebraska's 2011 schedule look like? Will Nebraska and Iowa play on Thanksgiving weekend?

Today was just the beginning of proud new start for the university. **N**

Send me your comments or story ideas to aaron@huskersillustrated.com.

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BO KNOWS

Who better to address the issue of Nebraska's joining the Big Ten than Bo Pelini, a Youngstown, Ohio, native and Ohio State grad, class of 1990?

Oh yes, he also got his coaching start as an Iowa grad assistant.

"It's a great conference. It has

a great reputation. We're excited about it," Pelini said.

"But we're in a situation where everybody knows my philosophy; we concentrate on the task at hand and the task at hand is what we have coming up here in September. Our full concentration right now is on being the best football team we can be in the fall."

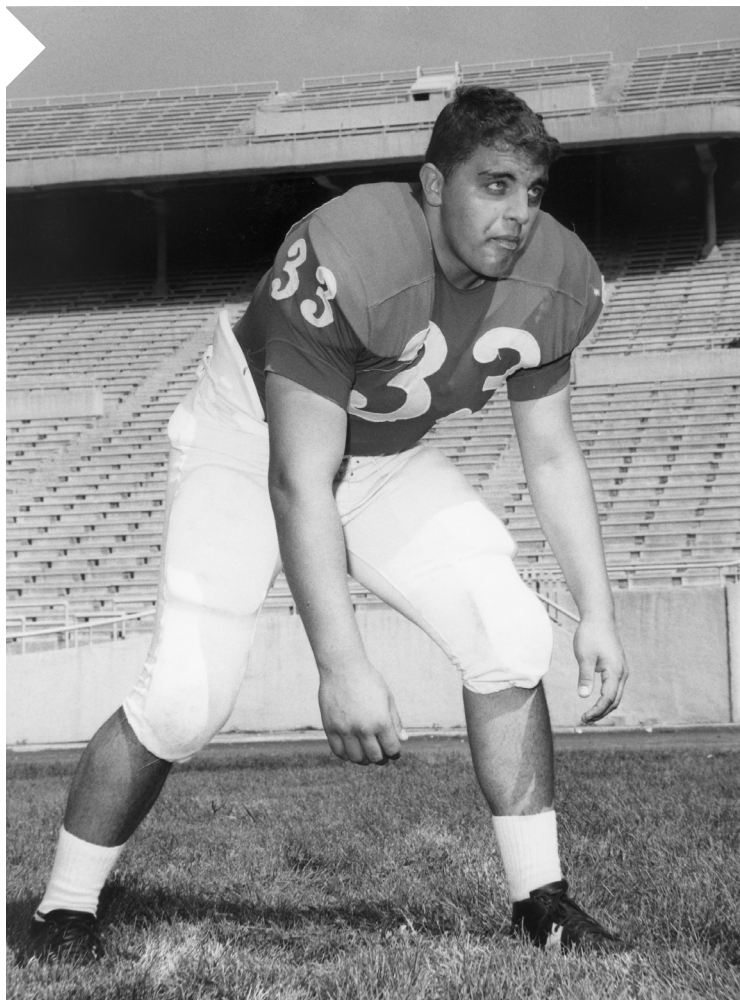
BIG TEN
CONFERENCE

As for leaving traditions behind, "I'm not a real emotional guy," he said. "You all know that."

The answer was vintage Pelini, according to Nebraska Chancellor Harvey Perlman.

"You would've got the same response if we joined the NFL," said Perlman.





WAY-BACK MACHINE

Nebraska's first out-of-state opponent was Iowa. Teams representing the schools played in 1891, the second year Nebraska fielded a team. Iowa won 22-0 in Omaha.

The schools were members of the Western Inter-State University Foot Ball Association (1892-97) as well as the Missouri Valley Conference, established in 1907. Iowa, which joined what became the Big Ten in 1899, was briefly a member of the Missouri Valley Conference as well.

Iowa was a regular non-conference Husker opponent in the 1930s and 1940s, but the neighboring states' football rivalry has been renewed only six times since then.

Nebraska won three of four in a home-and-home series with the Hawkeyes from 1979 to 1982. Former Cornhusker **BARRY ALVAREZ**, the athletic director at Wisconsin, was an assistant on Iowa coach **HAYDEN FRY**'s staff back then, and "when it was over, he (Alvarez) said, 'Man, I'm glad that's over because he was a Nebraska guy and he was trying to beat us,'"

TOM OSBORNE said.

FUTURE OF KANSAS

Nebraska has been unjustly blamed for the demise of the Big 12, with Kansas and Missouri, Nebraska's oldest rivals, among those with an uncertain conference future.

"Believe me, I agonized about those people," said Nebraska Athletic Director Tom Osborne. "And I felt, well, if I could wave a magic wand, raise my hand and fix everything in the Big 12 . . .

In addition to talk Colorado might leave for the Pac-10, which the Buffaloes, Missouri was showing interest in joining the Big Ten. "We came to the conclusion this (the Big 12) wasn't going to hold together any great length of time from what we were seeing," Osborne said.

Missouri should have no complaint if the Big 12 dissolves. Kansas, however, would be a victim of circumstance in such a

situation. "They've got such a great basketball tradition," Osborne said of the Jayhawks. "I can't imagine that they won't end up somewhere, OK."

"It may be more in a basketball-oriented conference. Like I said, I really hope they can keep the Big 12 together, and maybe if they added Louisville, for instance. I don't know, Memphis would be attractive. But they'll need to do something like that to keep Kansas basketball on the map."

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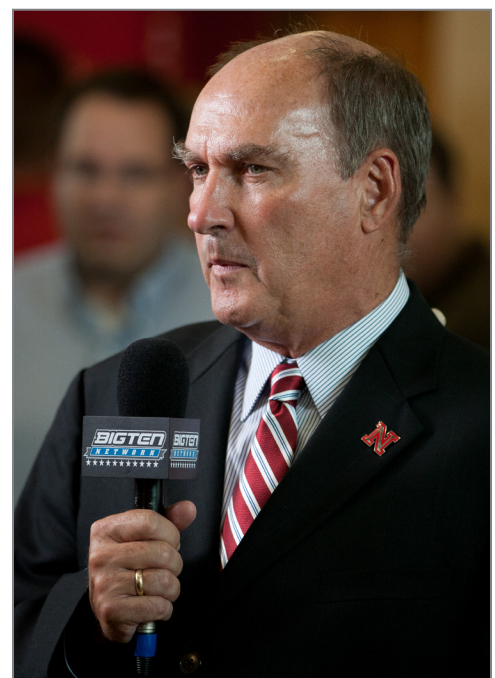


IT WAS UNANIMOUS

Athletic Director **TOM OSBORNE** polled Cornhusker coaches about moving to the Big Ten, twice. And the vote was unanimous in favor of the move both times.

"I was just really surprised," said Osborne, who expected a 60-40 or 70-30 split.

"I didn't try to frame it in such a way that they would feel I wanted them to do that. So we voted one time, and then about three days ago, after I came back from the Big 12 meetings, I repeated the question. I got 'em all in one room, and I said, 'Now, this is getting serious now. This isn't just speculation, and I really need to know,' " he said.



How the Big 12 went wrong

WHERE DID IT go wrong? That's a fair question by Nebraska fans when it comes to the demise of a conference that has claimed a basketball national championship and three BCS national titles.

Fourteen years is nothing for a mobster doing time, let alone for a conference that had produced greatness. So why did Nebraska feel the grass is greener in the Big Ten? It comes down to trust and leadership. Despite triumphs in several sports, the conference was doomed.

The question isn't why didn't the conference make it to year 15? It's how in Beano Cook's name (the Patron Pope of college football) did it last this long? Consider these three factors Nebraska lived with during its stay in USSR-Texas... errr the Big 12.

Loyalty is a characteristic deep in Nebraska's culture. When Southwest Conference teams were looking for a home, a place to pool their potential income, they turned to the Big Eight. The conference at the time was sailing along nicely without Bevo, Reveille, Yosemite Sam, and Buford – the anti-social bear. Nebraska had just come off two national titles, Colorado was a major player with top 10 national rankings and a widely viewed non-conference schedule. Kansas State was up and coming, a nice national story on finding its way off the mat. And while Oklahoma was down, they were just a couple years away from the Bob Stoops' salvation.

The Big Eight reached out to the four SWC schools with no port to call their own, and formed the Big 12. If you are invited as a guest, you can be pleased with what your host is cooking, but by no means should you order steak and crab

BY CHRIS SCHMIDT HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED RADIO

legs. Texas did that. The Longhorns came into Nebraska's kingdom and started making the rules, and teams like Kansas, Missouri, and Iowa State followed suit to take down the landlord. The Nebraska-Oklahoma rivalry was the first to go. For years and years, fair or unfair, Nebraska's season was based on whether it beat Barry Switzer and company. All that hard work, and success was thrown away, not strictly by Texas, but it was agreed that Nebraska and its one true rival would now meet only every two years. Kidney shot number one.

Issue number two was Prop 48 players. Kids whom Nebraska had recruited for years, who came from tough backgrounds and wouldn't have had a shot at a college education, were given an opportunity to prove themselves academically before they set foot on the field. Some were giant difference-makers, some played scout team or were part of Nebraska's depth, but a large percentage have gone on to successful lives because of the chance Nebraska afforded them. With the formation of the Big 12 it was see ya partial qualifiers. Texas and company viewed the Prop 48 kids as a vital recruiting advantage Nebraska had. They voted and took it away.

Three strikes you're out. Issue number three that didn't go Nebraska's way, was a conference title game. Another vote Nebraska lost 11-1. It is much more difficult to go unbeaten today than 15 years ago. Today schools have a uniform number of scholarships, and even USC can't avoid serious probation. In 1996, Nebraska could have, and would have played for a third consecutive national title, but James Brown and Texas didn't

make NU "feel good" that fateful Saturday in St. Louis. The initial Big 12 title game cost the conference a national championship, and history would go on to repeat itself. Kansas State lost to Texas A&M in 1998, keeping Bill Snyder and the 'Cats out of the Fiesta Bowl. Kansas State would return the favor to Oklahoma in 2003. The Sooners still played for the title because USC was locked into the Rose Bowl with the Pac-10. Had the Pac-10 allowed USC to play LSU, the Sooners would have been on the outside looking in. Texas was poised for a title run, but was upset by a white-hot Colorado team 41-38 in 2001. Nebraska, by sitting idle, edged out Colorado and was used as punching bag by Miami. Two times the Big 12 title game cost the conference a shot at the national title, and three more times the football gods sided with a Big 12 team, only because the Rose Bowl was not part of the BCS.

Factor all of these bumps in the road along with the conference offices moving next door to JR Ewing is enough to make one dry heave. And the final straw? Pointing the finger instead of the thumb as to why this adolescent league is gone. Stay, please, stay . . . oh, Nebraska, hold on a second, I've got another call from, well, ah, it's not important.

The Big 12 was fun at times with entertaining teams, coaches, and a good track record of titles, but it's crazy to think Nebraska put up with it as long as it did. Stability over greed: 12 minus 1 does not equal zero, 12 minus 2 does not equal zero, but 12 minus 6 equals a college football earthquake. Thank you Bevo and the Ten Dwarfs. **N**

BIG TEN[®] NEBRASKA'S NEW HOME



MEET THE 12 MEMBERS OF THE BIG 10



IOWA

Location: Iowa City, Iowa
Enrollment (Founded): 30,561 (1847)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$79.5 million
Total Sports: 24
Stadium: Kinnick Stadium (70,585)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 70,214 (21)
Surface: FieldTurf
Joined Big Ten: 1899
Big Ten Football Titles:
FB National Titles*: None
Head Football Coach: Kirk Ferentz
School Colors: Black and Gold
Nebraska's Record Against: 26-12-3



ILLINOIS

Location: Urbana-Champaign, Ill.
Enrollment (Founded): 42,326 (1867)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$55.6 million
Total Sports: 21
Stadium: Memorial Stadium (62,870)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 59,545 (29)
Surface: FieldTurf
Joined Big Ten: 1896
Big Ten Football Titles: 15
FB National Titles*: None
Head Football Coach: Ron Zook
School Colors: Orange and Blue
Nebraska's Record Against: 7-2-1



INDIANA

Location: Bloomington
Enrollment (Founded): 40,354 (1820)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$60.6
Total Sports: 24
Stadium: Memorial Stadium (52,692)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 41,833
Surface: FieldTurf
Joined Big Ten: 1899
Big Ten Football Titles: 2
FB National Titles*: None
Head Football Coach: Bill Lynch
School Colors: Crimson and Cream
Nebraska's Record Against: 7-9-3



MICHIGAN

Location: Ann Arbor, Mich.
Enrollment (Founded): 24,631 (1817)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$99 million
Total Sports: 27
Stadium: Michigan Stadium (106,201)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 108,933 (1)
Surface: FieldTurf
Joined Big Ten: 1896
Big Ten Football Titles: 42
FB National Titles*: '48, '97
Head Football Coach: Rich Rodriguez
School Colors: Maize and Blue
Nebraska's Record Against: 2-3-1



MICHIGAN STATE

Location: East Lansing, Mich.
Enrollment (Founded): 32,588 (1855)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$77.7 million
Total Sports: 25
Stadium: Spartan Stadium (75,005)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 74,741 (19)
Surface: Grass
Joined Big Ten: 1949
Big Ten Football Titles: 6
FB National Titles*: '52, '65
Head Football Coach: Mark Dantonio
School Colors: Green and White
Nebraska's Record Against: 5-0



MINNESOTA

Location: Minneapolis, Minn.
Enrollment (Founded): 28,516 (1851)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$70.3 million
Total Sports: 25
Stadium: TFC Bank Stadium (50,720)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 50,805
Surface: FieldTurf
Joined Big Ten: 1896
Big Ten Football Titles: 18
FB National Titles*: '36, '40, '41, '60
Head Football Coach: Tim Brewster
School Colors: Maroon and Gold
Nebraska's Record Against: 20-29-2



NEBRASKA

Location: Lincoln, NE
Enrollment (Founded): 23,573 (1869)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$75.5 million
Total Sports: 23
Stadium: Memorial Stadium (81,067)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 85,888 (10)
Surface: FieldTurf
Joined Big Ten: NA
Big Ten Football Titles: N/A
FB National Titles*: '70, '71, '94, '95, '97
Head Football Coach: Bo Pelini
School Colors: Scarlet and Cream
Nebraska's Record Against: NA



NORTHWESTERN

Location: Evanston, Ill.
Enrollment (Founded): 7,976 (1851)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$48.6 million
Total Sports: 19
Stadium: Ryan Field (47,130)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 24,190
Surface: Grass
Joined Big Ten: 1896
Big Ten Football Titles: 8
FB National Titles*: None
Head Football Coach: Pat Fitzgerald
School Colors: Purple and White
Nebraska's Record Against: 3-1



OHIO STATE

Location: Columbus, Ohio
Enrollment (Founded): 38,473 (1870)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$119.9 million
Total Sports: 37
Stadium: Ohio Stadium (102,329)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 105,261 (3)
Surface: FieldTurf
Joined Big Ten: 1912
Big Ten Football Titles: 33
FB National Titles*: '42, '54, '57, '68, '02
Head Football Coach: Jim Tressel
School Colors: Scarlet and Gray
Nebraska's Record Against: 0-2



PENN STATE

Location: State College, Pa.
Enrollment (Founded): 42,914 (1855)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$95.9 million
Total Sports: 29
Stadium: Beaver Stadium (107,282)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 107,008 (2)
Surface: Grass
Joined Big Ten: 1990
Big Ten Football Titles: 3
FB National Titles*: 1982, '86
Head Football Coach: Joe Paterno
School Colors: Blue and White
Nebraska's Record Against: 7-8



PURDUE

Location: West Lafayette, Ind.
Enrollment (Founded): 31,290 (1869)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$59.9 million
Total Sports: 20
Stadium: Ross-Ade Stadium (62,500)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 50,457
Surface: Prescription Athletic Turf/Grass
Joined Big Ten: 1896
Big Ten Football Titles: 8
FB National Titles*: None
Head Football Coach: Danny Hope
School Colors: Old Gold and Black
Nebraska's Record Against: 0-1



WISCONSIN

Location: Madison, Wisc.
Enrollment (Founded): 28,462 (1848)
2009 Athletic Revenue: \$93.5 million
Total Sports: 25
Stadium: Camp Randall Stadium (80,321)
2009 Attendance (Nat'l Rank): 80,109 (15)
Surface: FieldTurf
Joined Big Ten: 1896
Big Ten Football Titles: 11
FB National Titles*: None
Head Football Coach: Bret Bielema
School Colors: Cardinal and White
Nebraska's Record Against: 3-2

* Football national titles listed are in the modern era (since 1936)

ADDRESSING ALIGNMENT

Big Ten Network on-air talent proposed three possible realignment scenarios during a recent broadcast. The first two proposals would align the divisions based on geographic location. The third would break the four historic football schools (Ohio State, Michigan, Penn State and Nebraska) into separate divisions. The second and third scenarios include crossover games -- games outside of the division that would be played every year to protect historic rivalries. Most of the historic rivalries would be preserved in the East/West scenario, eliminating a need for crossover games.

Tom Osborne on how the Big 12 will be structured:

"I'm just kind of assuming there might be an East and a West Division. But however they decide to divide it, that's the way we're going to play it. But it would make some sense there would be an East and a West, where you would play across division lines probably three times a year, kind of like we do in the Big 12. If it stayed at 12 members, that would make some sense.

"More than that (12), I don't know how it would shake out."

SCENARIO 1

EAST

Indiana
Michigan
Michigan State
Ohio State
Penn State
Purdue

WEST

Illinois
Iowa
Minnesota
NEBRASKA
Northwestern
Wisconsin

SCENARIO 2

NORTH

Illinois
Michigan
Michigan State
Minnesota
Northwestern
Wisconsin

SOUTH

Indiana
Iowa
NEBRASKA
Ohio State
Penn State
Purdue

CROSSOVER GAMES

Michigan/Ohio State
Minnesota/Iowa
Illinois/Indiana
Michigan State/Penn State
Wisconsin/**NEBRASKA**
Northwestern/Purdue

SCENARIO 3

BO

Michigan
NEBRASKA
Michigan State
Minnesota
Iowa
Illinois

WOODY

Ohio State
Penn State
Wisconsin
Purdue
Indiana
Northwestern

CROSSOVER GAMES

Michigan/Ohio State
NEBRASKA/Purdue
Michigan State/Penn State
Iowa/Wisconsin
Illinois/Northwestern
Minnesota/Indiana

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HUSKERS
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Nebraska's move just the beginning

THE SUMMERTIME IN Bloomington is peaceful.

With the students gone, it's easier to find a parking space on Kirkwood, the whole town is quieter and the breakneck pace that marks the school year slows to a crawl. B-Town is the picture of Midwest stability with the rhythms of the days falling into a predictable pattern.

About 250 miles north in Chicago, however, the Big Ten is working hard to bring upheaval not just to the conference, but to all of college sports. Expansion talk has been swirling around the conference for a few months, but the dominoes are about to drop, and the changes will lead to a major scrambling of the college athletics landscape. It might even lead

**BY KEN BIKOFF
INSIDE INDIANA MAGAZINE**

to the end of the NCAA.

I've gone on record before as saying that I'm not in favor of expanding the Big Ten. It's a money grab, pure and simple, and it isn't a decision that would be made with the best interests of the fans in mind. But if I strongly felt that way when it was only the Big Ten that was talking about expanding, I really hate it now that other conferences are jumping on board.

The stories started to come hot and heavy in early June. What had been a discussion about the Big Ten adding possibly as many as five teams snowballed to include major changes in the Pac-10 and the likely disintegration of the Big 12.

Triggering all the talk were the rumors that the Big Ten would be inviting Nebraska to join the Big Ten. The Big 12 understandably got nervous and laid down an ultimatum, reportedly telling Nebraska that the conference needed a decision on the future no later than June 11.

Then, on June 10, word broke that Colorado had been extended an invitation to join the Pac-10, and there was talk that the Pac-10 would invite a total of six Big 12 teams—Texas, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State and Colorado—to join the conference, forming a 16-team league that would match the 16-team Big East. Left out in the cold, apparently, would be Baylor, Kansas, Kansas State,

Missouri and Iowa State.

More rumors spread throughout the day, including talk that the 11-team Big Ten would actually extend invitations to Nebraska, Texas and Texas A&M to form a 14-team league. Other schools mentioned when it came to Big Ten expansion included Missouri, Rutgers, Syracuse, Pittsburgh and Notre Dame.

This is a still-changing situation. Few things, as of this writing, have been hashed out for good, but since this is a time of “what-if” scenarios, let’s take a look at some of the ramifications of the moves.

The most immediate would be the death of the Big 12, a football behemoth that has more than held its own on the college basketball scene over the years. I’m not a fan of tearing down local rivalries and forcing teams to travel halfway across the country to play conference games, mainly because of the cost involved, not only for the schools, but for the team’s faithful. If you’re a Colorado fan, it’s conceivable to travel to every road game by car. It would require a lot of miles, but it is possible. A move to the Pac-10, however, makes it harder for fans of every team to travel to road games to cheer on their teams. Putting a stake in the heart of one of the biggest, most competitive conferences in the country and watching the bulk of those teams move to games on the

West Coast isn’t in the best interests of the fans.

But the biggest long-term effect of the conference expansions could be the end of the NCAA. For instance, if the Pac-10, Big Ten, ACC and SEC all expand to at least 16 teams—and there will be plenty of schools willing to jump into the shuffle—those conferences could join the Big East to form an entity of its own, outside of the

“If you love college sports, this should be a nervous time. Your passion may be changing forever.”

NCAA. The conferences could have their own television channels, their own tournaments, their own rules, leaving the NCAA as the keeper of the flame for the smaller schools in college sports.

In other words, you could have a situation where the biggest of the big boys decide they are going to take their respective footballs and basketballs and baseballs and go play by themselves, while the other schools would be left out of the spotlight.

I’ve spoken to enough coaches and administrators over the years from schools all over the country

to know that the NCAA isn’t the most popular entity on the planet. The NCAA tends to be petty, inconsistent when it comes to applying its rules and less than open when it comes to some of its decisions. Plenty of athletic departments would love it if the NCAA’s ridiculously huge and confusing rulebook suddenly was dumped and a new association started from scratch. Creating a new entity also would allow the big conferences to renegotiate television contracts to ensure that revenues weren’t always distributed to their smaller brethren.

Football is the driving force behind the expansions, and there has been talk in the past about the creation of a College Football Association that would allow football programs to operate outside of the NCAA’s purview. That scenario could certainly come into play with conference expansion, but it’s far more likely that the big-name schools would want to band together to cut the NCAA out altogether.

The bottom line is that this summer of upheaval in college athletics likely will go far beyond just conference affiliations. College sports, as we know it, could be changing in front of our eyes and not necessarily for the better. If you love college sports, this should be a nervous time. Your passion may be changing forever. **N**

BIG TEN CONFERENCE

Expansion doesn't always equal progress

WHEN PENN STATE joined the Big Ten in 1990, the shockwaves sent through the collegiate sporting world were minimal. After all, the Lions were an independent school in the ilk of Notre Dame with no conference affiliations to sever. For 90 percent of the country, it was page three of the sports section type of stuff. Intriguing, but not mind-shattering.

For fans of other Big Ten schools, however, the news was monumental and far-reaching. Ohio State and Michigan suddenly had a bona fide football rival that could compete for national championships year in and year out. Iowa and Minnesota suddenly faced the prospect of traveling across half the country for road games, with the conference's first East Coast team.

The rest of the Big Ten had the

**BY MIKE JOHNSTON
INSIDE INDIANA MAGAZINE**

better part of three years to prepare for Penn State's arrival. JoePa and Company didn't join the sporting fray until 1993, and their entrance into Big Ten play went mostly without a hitch. The biggest complaint was the fact that the "home-and-home" format of Big Ten basketball had to go by the wayside. All in all, it was a darn smooth transition. For those who were concerned about academic issues, Penn State certainly fit that bill as well. The Big Ten was the only conference that had every member in the Association of American Universities.

Here we are, 17 years later. Apparently that's the limit of our conference's attention span. Here comes Nebraska, another traditional

football power. This time, however, the stakes are different. As the cliché goes, it's a whole new ball game.

In the decade and a half since Penn State joined the Big Ten, the college football landscape has changed in ways that many never would have imagined. The BCS runs the show with the six major conferences in tow. Each conference has television deals that run for staggering amounts of money. College football can't even be remotely compared to a sport anymore. It is a business at its most basic level, and a big one at that.

As with any business, the prospect of expansion is always an intriguing one. So when Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany announced several months ago that expansion to 12, 14 or even 16 teams was being discussed, it was hard to be filled with shock. What was

surprising was the speed in which the expansion prospect turned from a mere idea to rushed execution.

For years, the thought that the Big Ten was lagging behind without a conference football championship game was a prevalent one among Midwestern fans. That no longer appears to be an issue with the addition of Nebraska. The only question that remains is if Nebraska will be joined by two, or even four, more institutions. Those in the national media seem to be concerned about which schools those might be and the inevitable collapse of the Big 12, instead of the most important issue of all - does the Big Ten really know what they're doing?

At best, the addition of Nebraska finally gets the Big Ten in the mix for a championship game, which seems inevitable. At worst, it's a rushed decision based more on the fear of having egg on their face than improving the conference. What has the Big Ten gained if Notre Dame, Mizzou, Texas, Pitt, Rutgers, and others decide to stay put or join other conferences rather than the Big Ten? What has the Big Ten actually accomplished other than creating a chain reaction of conference departures that won't be stopped any time soon?

At this point, doesn't the Big Ten have to add four more teams? Don't they have to continue their madness, their seemingly possessed movement to expand? Why not add Kansas and Mizzou, that would

boost the conference's basketball profile, much as Nebraska will do for football.

There was nothing wrong with the Big Ten before Penn State joined. Luckily, the addition was one that has worked reciprocally. There was nothing wrong with the Big Ten a week ago in its current form. By adding a 12th team, and creating chaos throughout the entire college system, the Big Ten has a responsibility to make sure that this

“Why not add Kansas and Mizzou, that would boost the conference's basketball profile...”

addition is just as smooth.

This isn't a fantasy world. Jobs, fan bases and the future of collegiate athletics hinge on the next few weeks. Tom Osborne and Nebraska are a welcome addition from a geographical and dollar standpoint. There is much more to college athletics than dollar signs and geographical equity. We'll find out soon enough whether or not the Big Ten got this right. Until then, just keep your fingers crossed. **N**

What they're saying in Indiana

“We are excited to welcome the University of Nebraska to the Big Ten Conference. They are a perfect fit to what we believe is a group of institutions committed to combining the best that academia and athletic competition have to offer. We look forward to building on this new relationship.”

FRED GLASS, Director of Athletics

“Nebraska is a first-class institution that for years has competed at the highest level in intercollegiate athletics and have a loyal fan base with obvious great support. I have followed their programs for many years with great admiration. We welcome them to the Big Ten Conference.”

TOM CREAN, Men's Basketball Coach

“We are excited about Nebraska joining the Big Ten. We think it's arguably the best conference in the country and adding a powerhouse like Nebraska who's great in all sports, particularly football and women's basketball, it just adds to the Big Ten. We welcome a great program like Nebraska to the Big Ten Conference.”

FELISHA LEGETTE-JACK,
Women's Basketball Coach

“Nebraska is one of the outstanding institutions in the country,” Lynch said. “It is a great fit for the Big Ten both geographically and competitively. Nebraska's football program is one of the truly elite in the country. It is a model program many of us have studied over the years and it will be a great addition to the Big Ten Conference.”

BILL LYNCH, Football Coach



THE FINAL WORD

BY MIKE BABCOCK

A day to make Devaney smile

WITHOUT A DOUBT, Bob Devaney would have looked at the historic proceedings at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Van Brunt Visitors Center and smiled.

The Center is the university's "front door," according to the school's website, welcoming visitors, alumni, guests and students. It is the "gateway" to the campus, the website says.

It officially welcomed Big Ten Conference Commissioner Jim Delany in late afternoon of June 11. And Delany, in turn, officially welcomed Nebraska to his tradition-rich conference.

Devaney would have approved. He would have delighted in the drama.

The Hall of Fame coach was responsible for restoring Cornhusker football tradition, beginning with his first season in 1962. And he came from Big Ten country, by way of Wyoming.

Devaney was from Saginaw, Mich. He coached in Michigan high schools. And he began his college coaching career at Michigan State, under Biggie Munn and then Duffy Daugherty.

Daugherty was a Big Ten legend, like Woody Hayes and Bo Schembechler. And he recommended Devaney when Nebraska went looking for a coach following the 1961 season.

Devaney built the program early on with athletes from the Big Ten region, from Ohio and Minnesota, from Illinois and Iowa as well as from Michigan. Bob Brown came from Cleveland, Larry Kramer from Austin, Minn. Walt Barnes was from Chicago, LaVerne Allers from Davenport, Iowa.

Wayne Meylan, a 1960s version of Ndamukong Suh, came from Bay City, Mich.

Devaney laid the foundation with a victory at Michigan in the second game in 1962. Before the season, he and his staff pointed to that game as essential to long-term success.

"We set a team goal that if we didn't accomplish much else during the year, we were going to go up there and beat Michigan," Devaney said looking back, many years later.

Michigan, 6-3 in 1961, had been hit hard by graduation. The Wolverines would finish 2-7 in 1962, their only victories against Army and Illinois. Even so, they carried the weight of the Big Ten.

Winning at Ann Arbor gave the players belief in the coaches, who "felt that to get the program going again, to sell people on what we were doing, we had to beat Michigan," Devaney said.

Cornhusker Athletic Director Tom Osborne, a graduate assistant on Devaney's staff in 1962, used the word "culture" in talking about Nebraska's move to the Big Ten.

"I just think that it's a comfortable fit," he said. "It doesn't mean that we're going to agree 100 percent of the time, but I do think that there's a lot of similarity, an emphasis on work ethic, a lot of people are fairly blue-collar, pretty good values throughout the Midwest.

"So I think that's going to help (in the transition)."

Work ethic, blue-collar, Midwestern values, such qualities characterized Nebraska football long before Devaney arrived. But they were obscured to some degree during the two frustrating decades that preceded his arrival. Winning brought them back to the surface.

Throughout Cornhusker history, there has been talk of membership in the Big Ten, in the early years wishful thinking because of the conference's prestige, later as interesting but unrealistic speculation, based on geography and some shared history. Iowa was Nebraska's first out-of-state opponent. Minnesota was a non-conference constant on the schedule into the mid-1970s.

The culture of the Missouri Valley Conference through the Big Six, the Big Seven and the Big Eight was significantly altered with the formation of the Big 12. Tradition gave way to expediency.

When Osborne and Nebraska Chancellor Harvey Perlman first met with Delany to consider the possibility of membership in the Big Ten, "I was impressed by the fact he said, 'You know, we've seen so many conferences just kind of get smashed together without any preparatory work, any idea of how you're going to merge these cultures of these philosophies,'" Osborne said.

"And he said, 'This is a big deal, and the reason some of these (conferences) don't work so well is because that forethought and that preparation didn't occur.'"

Delany was right, said Osborne, "that sometimes the reason conferences come apart is you assume everybody understands each other and you assume the culture's common, and all of a sudden you get thrust together and you realize it really isn't the way you thought."

Nebraska's culture, like its geography, is that of the Big Ten.

"Fit is very important," Delany said.

What those words reflected undoubtedly would have brought a smile to Devaney's face. **N**